

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated December 22, 2010. In the office action, an Election/Restriction requirement was presented. Claims 1-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Valdez et al. (WO 97/20185, "Valdez") in view of Beal (WO 00/73728). Claims 2-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Valdez in view of Beal and further in view of Chene (EP 0 997 700) and Hadler (DE 102 39 910) and Dinkha et al. (US 4,939,996, "Dinkha").

By the present amendment, claims 1-25 have been amended. New claim 26 has been added. Claims 3, 5-7 and 24-25 have been withdrawn due to the election of Species A. The applicants note that claims 1 and 26 are generic claims, and therefore if claim 1 is held to be allowable, then the withdrawn claims are entitled to consideration.

At entry of this paper, claims 1-2, 4, 8-23, and 26 will be pending for further consideration and examination in the application. All rejections are traversed, in so far as the rejections are applicable to the present claims. Reconsideration and allowance of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Support for the amendments to currently pending claims 1-2, 4, 8-23, and 26 can be found, for example, in Fig.1, and the associated text, in the specification.

Support for the amendments to withdrawn claim 3, can be found, for example, in Figs.4-6, and the associated text, in the specification.

Support for the amendments to withdrawn claim 5, can be found, for example, in Fig.2, and the associated text, in the specification.

Support for the amendments to withdrawn claim 6, can be found, for example, in Figs.4 and 6, and the associated text, in the specification.

Support for the amendments to withdrawn claim 7, can be found, for example, in Fig.5, and the associated text, in the specification.

Support for the amendments to withdrawn claims 24 and 25, can be found, for example, in Fig.6, and the associated text, in the specification.

RE: REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

In regards to the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejection of claims 1-25, claim 1 has been amended and no longer recites the rejected phrase. The applicants respectfully submit that the rejection should therefore be withdrawn.

RE: REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

In regards to newly amended claim 1, none of the cited reference, either individually or in combination, disclose, suggest, or otherwise render obvious the following features: “a first core and a second core, disposed one after the other in a firing direction ... wherein the first core is a solid core; wherein the second core includes a first region and a second region disposed one after the other in the firing direction, the first region including at least one of metallic balls and metallic granules, and the second region including at least one of a metallic powder and a ceramic powder.”

While Valdez discloses “a first core and a second core, disposed one after the other in a firing direction,” and arguably also suggests “wherein the first core is a solid core,” Valdez fails to disclose, suggest, or otherwise render obvious the following claimed features: “wherein the second core includes a first region and a

second region disposed one after the other in the firing direction, the first region including at least one of metallic balls and metallic granules, and the second region including at least one of a metallic powder and a ceramic powder.”

Beal does not remedy this deficiency of Valdez. Instead, Beal discloses that a second core consists entirely of a powder. Therefore, Beal fails to disclose, suggest, or otherwise render obvious the following claimed features: “wherein the second core includes a first region and a second region disposed one after the other in the firing direction, the first region including at least one of metallic balls and metallic granules, and the second region including at least one of a metallic powder and a ceramic powder.”

None of the other cited references, either individually or in combination, disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious the above discussed features of claim 1. Therefore, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn, and therefore claim 1 should be allowed.

In addition, all claims that depend from claim 1, including withdrawn claims, should be allowed, at the very least because they depend from an allowable independent claim.

In regards to new claim 26, none of the cited reference, either individually or in combination, disclose, suggest, or otherwise render obvious the following features: “a first core and a second core disposed one after the other in a firing direction, the first core being a solid core, the second core including a first region and a second region disposed one after the other in the firing direction, the first region including at least one of metallic balls and metallic granules, the second region including at least one of a metallic powder and a ceramic powder, and the first and second regions of

the second core compressed to be without cavities.” The arguments presented in regards to claim 1 are also applicable to claim 26.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims listed above as presently being under consideration in the application are now in condition for allowance.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is herein invited to telephone the undersigned attorneys at the local Washington, D.C. area telephone number of 703/312-6600 for discussing any Examiner's Amendments or other suggested actions for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims listed above as presently being under consideration in the application are now in condition for allowance.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Docket No. 306.45851X00), and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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